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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 001136

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SUBJECT: JAPAN'S CONCERNS ABOUT IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM
DOMINATE IRAN FM MOTTAKI'S MEETINGS IN TOKYO

REF: TOKYO 1064

Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer; Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki met with FM Aso for two hours on February 27 and thirty minutes with PM Koizumi on the 28th. The discussions focused primarily on the nuclear impasse but also covered a range of other bilateral issues. During the meetings, FM Aso and PM Koizumi made it clear to Mottaki that Iran should comply with all IAEA regulations and resolutions and must stop its enrichment activities. Mottaki stuck to Tehran's hardline and argued that Iran was responding to the current situation on the basis of "peace" and "justice" and cannot renounce its sovereign right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Mottaki said that there would be no "nuclear apartheid." Regarding the Russian proposal, Mottaki said that several outstanding "minor" issues remain including where it should take place, the time period, and participation in the scheme. He also claimed Iran would not agree to prohibit all enrichment activities. Tokyo is under the impression that Iran does not want the nuclear issue to be further discussed at the UNSC even though Tehran has publicly said Iran does not care. Officials at MOFA feel it might be useful to re-look at the conversion issue in the future if Tehran were to accept the Russian proposal. During the two days of meetings, Mottaki only referred to the issue of the Azadegan oil fields and Koizumi avoided the topic altogether. Mottaki's meeting with METI Minister Nikai was very brief and the lengthy discussion of the nuclear issue left no time for other economic topics. End Summary.

12. (C) On March 1, EST M/C, POL Deputy and ESToff met with Ministry of Foreign Affairs Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, and Science Bureau Director-General Takeshi Nakane at his request to receive a readout on Prime Minister Koizumi and Foreign Minister Aso's meetings with visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki. Nakane reported that FM Aso met with Mottaki for two hours on February 27 and thirty minutes with PM Koizumi on the 28th. The discussions focused primarily on the nuclear impasse but also covered a range of other bilateral issues. During the meetings, FM Aso and PM Koizumi made it clear to Mottaki that Iran should comply with all IAEA regulations and resolutions and must stop its enrichment activities. Japan hopes that negotiations based on the Russian proposal will offer a breakthrough to the impasse.

13. (C) On February 27, Aso explained to Mottaki that the Japanese public is very sensitive to nuclear issues, understandingly, since it is the only country that has experienced a nuclear attack. Therefore, Japan is committed

to strengthening the non-proliferation regime to ensure the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. No one denies Iran the right to peaceful use of nuclear energy, but in order to exercise this right, Iran has to restore the international community's confidence. Aso told Mottaki that Iran should take seriously the resolution adopted on February 4 by 27 countries. As long as Iran insists on conducting enrichment activities within its territory, it will be difficult to come to a resolution. Japan hopes that negotiations based on the Russian proposal will offer a breakthrough to the impasse. Aso also stressed that Japan expected Iran to make a wise decision regarding enrichment activities and to come back into compliance with IAEA resolutions.

¶4. (C) Mottaki said that Iran's enrichment activities are only for R&D purposes and on a laboratory scale. Aso responded that Iran needs to understand that Japan does not see an essential difference between laboratory scale and full-scale commercial activities. Mottaki said that Iran has been a member of the NPT for thirty years and that Tehran has been applying voluntary measures for quite some time. The new government in Iran is responding to the current situation on the basis of "peace" and "justice" and cannot renounce its sovereign right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Mottaki said that there would be no "nuclear apartheid."

¶5. (C) Regarding the Russian proposal, Mottaki said that several outstanding "minor" issues remain including where it should take place, the time period, and participation in the scheme. Iran will not stop its enrichment activities as this is something that the central authorities have already decided and is a policy the Iranian people support. Mottaki told Aso that it was not good to use the Security Council as a tool to create threats against Iran.

TOKYO 00001136 002 OF 003

¶6. (C) Nakane told EST M/C that both FM Aso and he were under the impression that Iran does not want the nuclear issue to be further discussed at the UNSC even though Tehran has publicly said Iran does not care. Nakane said that Iran is still negotiating with the Russians, but that he was not too optimistic on the outcome. Nakane did not see any signs of a policy shift in Iranian thinking. In the discussions, Mottaki gave the impression that Iran would be able to agree with the Russian proposal on the joint-venture project. However, in response to a question from FM Aso, Mottaki clarified that this does not mean that Iran would suspend its enrichment R&D efforts. In Iran's view, the Russian joint venture would be additional, rather than a replacement for Iranian enrichment.

¶7. (C) Nakane told EST M/C that most of what Mottaki said at the meetings was already known to Tokyo, but that there was one new point. Iran had previously said that enrichment activities in Russia could be carried out for two years. Aso said that this was too short of a period of time, and that it should continue for five to six years. Mottaki responded that this was unacceptable and that the two-year period would not work because Tehran would have to consider a new formula that would carry Iran through until the next reactor was built. (Note: Under the proposed agreement with Russia, Iranian scientists would be trained in Russia on enrichment techniques and Iranian fuel would be enriched in Russian facilities for a set period of time; the work would then transfer to facilities in Iran. In this case, Aso is arguing in favor of the activities staying in Russia for a significantly longer period of time than the Iranians. End Note.)

¶8. (C) During the subsequent thirty minute meeting with Koizumi, Mottaki played up the importance of the Japanese-Iranian relationship and tried to connect with the Japanese PM by talking about his time as Iranian Ambassador to Japan from 1995 to 1999. Koizumi responded that the relationship between the two countries was important not only

in the area of oil, but also in regard to Iran's potential to play a constructive role in the Middle East peace process. Koizumi then went into a lengthy discussion of how Japan was in the past defeated in a war in which Japan fought against the rest of the world. He said that Japan now regrets the decisions that led up to that war and that Tokyo would never again be isolated from the international community. Koizumi said that the international community is closely watching the Iranian nuclear situation and counseled Tehran to make a wise decision. Mottaki told Koizumi that he would convey this message to his superiors in Iran.

¶9. (C) In response to a question, Nakane told EST M/C that Mottaki only referred to the issue of the Azadegan oil fields and that Koizumi avoided the topic altogether. He confirmed that Mottaki did not offer any deals to Tokyo regarding the fields.

¶10. (C) Nakane referenced a message from Victor Cha of the NSC received by the Japanese Embassy in Washington, in which Cha had said Japan should make it clear to Iran that Tehran must stop its enrichment and conversion activities in Esfahan. Nakane explained that the EU3 and President Bush had both said they support the Russian proposal, which allows activities up to conversion but not enrichment. Nakane perceived some inconsistency between Cha's message and the President's. He said that he was not sure if an Iranian agreement would be reached on the Russian proposal, but explained that the GOJ feels that if it is reached, then it would be wise to reopen the issue of conversion activities. Nakane underscored that he understood that the United States could not accept such a position now, but explained that he personally felt it might be useful to re-look at the conversion issue in the future. (Note: We do not know the content of the message passed from the NSC to the Japanese embassy in Washington. There may have been some misunderstanding of what Cha was saying, or some mix-up in communication between Japan's embassy in Washington and Tokyo. This is a point worth clarifying. For our part, we confirmed that the President has gone on record as supporting the Russian proposal. End Note.)

¶11. (C) Nakane concluded the meeting by saying that he had recently talked to his counterpart Anatoly Antonov in Russia, who had told him very clearly that Moscow would not allow enrichment activities within the territory of Iran. Antonov

TOKYO 00001136 003 OF 003

said that Russia would neither agree to negotiate indefinitely nor go forward in the negotiations with the goal of defending Iran.

¶12. (C) According to MOFA's Second Middle East Division's Koichi Nakao, who interpreted at the Koizumi and Aso meetings, press reports that the Aso meeting was a tense "exchange of barbs" were inaccurate. Nakao described Aso as delivering a strong message that Iran's behavior risked isolating it from the international community, and said Mottaki replied by promising to pass the message back to Tehran, but added that while the tone was serious, at no time did it stray from an atmosphere of cordiality. Even as Aso continued to press for Iran to give up its enrichment program and Mottaki continued to claim the right to enrich on Iranian soil was a red line Tehran would not give up, Nakao said the dialogue remained "a discussion between friends."

¶13. (C) Nobuyori Kodaira, Director-General of METI's Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, told EMIN that the meeting between METI Minister Nikai and Mottaki was very brief and that the lengthy discussion of the nuclear issue left no time for economic topics. During the discussion Nikai reminded Mottaki of Japan's unique position as the only country ever to have experienced a nuclear bombing and went on to ask that Iran work with the international community to seek a solution to the Iran's nuclear development plans. Mottaki mentioned Japan's investment in the Azadegan field but time did not

allow for a discussion of the issue. (Note: according to a British Embassy contact, MOFA instructed Nikai to discuss only the nuclear issue during the Minister's meeting with Mottaki. End Note.)
SCHIEFFER